



LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

County of Los Angeles
Sheriff's Department Headquarters
4700 Ramona Boulevard
Monterey Park, California 91754-2169



April 28, 2009

ADOPTED

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

27 APRIL 28, 2009

Dear Supervisors:

Sachi A. Hamai
SACHI A. HAMAI
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**AUTHORIZE THE SHERIFF TO ACCEPT AN AWARD FROM THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FUND
(ALL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Department) is seeking your Board authorization to accept a funding award for the Arraignment and Visitation Video System (AVVS) pilot project.

**JOINT RECOMMENDATION WITH THE ACTING CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER
THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Authorize the Sheriff to accept an award from the Los Angeles County Information Technology Fund (ITF) for Fiscal Year 2009-10, in the total amount of \$300,000 for the AVVS pilot project.
2. Authorize the Sheriff or his designee to serve as Project Director of the program, to sign and execute said award, and to perform all further tasks necessary for completion of the project, including execution of amendments, extensions, contracts, renewals, and other award documents.

PURPOSE /JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

This letter requests authorization to accept funds from ITF for the AVVS pilot project for the period of July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010. The ITF Committee agreed to fund half of the projected budget for the AVVS pilot project with the balance of the \$600,000

A Tradition of Service

budget funded by the Productivity Investment Fund (PIF). This project is a joint effort by the Department's Correctional and Court Services Divisions.

The AVVS is envisioned as a long-term strategic system for the Department's Correctional and Court Services Divisions. AVVS is a video conferencing system that will increase safety, improve efficiency, and reduce costs associated with court arraignments and inmate visitations. There are two major components to this system. One component is video conferencing facilities at the courts and jail facilities that will be used for certain court appearances in lieu of transporting the inmate to court for a hearing. The second component will enable video visitation primarily by the public and will also accommodate visitations by probation/parole officers, public defenders, and attorneys through two-way audio/video units. Application software will be used for scheduling and managing the visitation process, recording and archiving sessions, and maintaining security and privacy. Additional application software in support of the electronic transfer of court documents and signature pads will be installed to support court video sessions.

Although sponsored by the Department, the pilot project is being implemented with oversight of an Executive Steering Committee that includes representatives from Superior Court, District Attorney, Public Defender, and Alternative Public Defender. Upon successful completion of the pilot, AVVS will be expanded in a second phase to additional Department facilities and courts, and other strategic locations throughout the County. A cost estimate for complete deployment of AVVS will be developed at the conclusion of the pilot. It is anticipated that the second phase will be funded in part by the Department and in part by other participating County departments.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The project is consistent with Los Angeles County's Strategic Plan, Goal 1, Operational Effectiveness; Goal 2, Children, Family, and Adult Well-Being, by providing committed employees and equipment to support more efficient scheduling and cost effective method of visitation; And Goal 5, Public Safety, by providing a faster, more efficient, and safer method of arraigning inmates, which affects the Superior Courts, District Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, and the Department's Correctional and Court Services Divisions.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

This award is for the period beginning July 1, 2009, and ending June 30, 2010. The anticipated program total amount is \$600,000 (\$300,000 from ITF and \$300,000 from PIF): \$250,000 for hardware, \$100,000 for software, \$50,000 for maintenance, and \$200,000 for professional services.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Video arraignment is codified in Penal Code Section 977 (c): "The court may permit the initial court appearance and arraignment of defendants held in any state, county, or local facility within the county on felony or misdemeanor charges, except for those defendants who were indicted by a grand jury, to be conducted by two-way electronic audio/video communication between the defendant and the courtroom in lieu of the physical presence of the defendant in the courtroom." Video visitation is identified in the Minimum Standards for Local Detention Facilities Title 24, Part 2, Section 470A.2.18: "Options or combinations of visiting options available include: contact visits; non-contact visits (with the inmate and visitor separated by glass); and video visitation."

This Board letter has been reviewed by County Counsel.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Video arraignment is now prevalent nationwide with implementation occurring in more than 200 jurisdictions. It is generally considered a cost-effective alternative to the physical transportation of inmates for arraignment and is also being utilized for other court events that do not require the physical presence of the defendant, such as case continuances, pleas, and motions. The first stage of the video arraignment pilot project includes "medical no-go's." This group consists of inmates that cannot be transported to court for an indefinite time period because of their medical condition. In addition to Constitutional Rights issues related to timely arraignment, this group occupies the expensive jail beds of the Department's Medical Services Bureau at an average cost of approximately \$700 per day. Through video arraignment, it is anticipated that pre-arraignment detention for this group can be reduced by an average of 3 days per inmate. In addition to "medical no-go's", other inmate categories that may also be eligible for video arraignment include inmates who commit crimes within jail facilities, inmates with fugitive warrants, and inmates arrested by the California Highway Patrol.

A video arraignment link will initially be established and implemented between the medical ward at Twin Towers Correctional Facility, and the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center – Department 30. The primary objective of this first stage is to ensure that business processes are viable.

In the second stage of the video arraignment component of the pilot phase, the Department will solicit additional high volume arraignment courtrooms and additional jail facilities for participation. Locations currently under consideration include Compton Court, Central Jail Arraignment Court and the newly constructed Los Angeles Police Department Metropolitan Jail Facility. This second stage of the video arraignment

component of the pilot phase will provide a basis to measure the operational efficiencies and savings that can be derived through video arraignment on a larger scale.

Video visitation will limit inmate movement, specifically with the high-risk inmates, to provide a safer jail environment for both inmates and correctional staff. High-risk inmates must be prepared, escorted individually to the visiting area, secured in a high security inmate visiting seat, and the visit monitored by visiting area deputies. Upon completion of the visit, the high-risk inmates must be escorted back to their housing location by deputies. This is a highly labor-intensive process. The video visitation system will enable frequent and safer visitation sessions and reduce participants' travel time to and from correctional facilities. A number of units will be installed within secure housing areas, as well as public visiting areas at the jail facilities and other remote locations.

A video visitation link will be established at key jail facilities with video units placed in both secure areas and public visiting areas. The identified facilities are Men's Central Jail, Century Regional Detention Facility, North County Correctional Facility, Twin Towers Correctional Facility, and San Dimas Sheriff's Station.

CONCLUSION

Upon your Board's approval, please instruct the Executive Office to return four copies of the adopted Board letter to the Department's Correctional Services Division. The Department's contact for this requested action is Chief Alexander R. Yim, Correctional Services Division, at (213) 893-5017.

Sincerely,



LEROY D. BACA
SHERIFF

Reviewed and approved by:



RICHARD SANCHEZ
ACTING CHIEF INFORMATION
OFFICER